

## OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

November 12, 1980

ATTORNEY GENERAL

TO FileFROM Reed W. NeumanSUBJECT Dead Creek/Sauget Dumps: Interview with Charles McDonald,  
Monsanto Employee

11/23/80

1:25 p.m.

Today Steve Woods and I went to the house of Mr. Charles McDonald, a long-time Monsanto employee, who lives on Judith Lane, 3 or 4 doors away from Dead Creek. Steve has spoken to him in person some weeks earlier, and I wished to follow up some of the questions Steve had asked at that time.

Mr. McDonald has been living and working in the area since as far back as the late 1940's. He said over the years there have been fires in Dead Creek on many occasions, similar to the ones attracting all the attention this past summer. This summer in particular has been very hot and dry and there have been more fires in the Creek than usual.

As he recalls, the Creek long ago used to be free-flowing and have standing water in it. Also, the pond next to Mr. Allan's Florist Shop on Walnut Street was excavated by the Hall Construction Company. Some of the neighbors in the community started a petition drive at one time to have the hole filled in, but that drive failed. The cut-through connecting the excavation pond to Dead Creek has been there as far back as Mr. McDonald can remember and he does not have any idea why or by whom the cut was made.

Up in the area of the Monsanto complex, he recalls that the Creek used to run through that property all the way to the Illinois Central Tracks on the north. Apparently Monsanto filled in the Creek on their property, long before Mr. McDonald started to work there. Apparently Monsanto bought the Krummrich Plant from the Commercial Acid Company of East St. Louis in 1928.

009673

November 11, 1980

Page 2

Also, Falling Springs Road used to run through the Plant area, but since has been diverted around the Monsanto Plant.

As to any of the industries directly discharging wastes to the Creek, it had been his assumption all along that both Monsanto and Cerro Copper (predecessor: Lewin Metals Company) had been at one time directly discharging to the Creek. He used to tell his kids to stay out of the Creek because of the chemicals and other materials that were in the Creek. He recalls some of the stuff in the Creek bed as being some of the same materials that he was familiar with in production at the Monsanto Plant.

I asked him about the operations of the Harold Waggoner Company trucking facility. He recalled on many occasions seeing Waggoner's trucks backed up to the Creek bank with employees washing out or rinsing out the trailers over the side of the Creek. He termed this a pretty regular occurrence. He does not know of any other companies or truckers doing this sort of thing but says he would not doubt it if someone else did it, and made the strange comment that anyone doing this "probably did it with Leo's blessing", apparently referring to Leo Sauget.

He told us that long ago he worked at the Chemical Warfare Services Plant in the Monsanto complex. He was involved in the making of a chlorine product called CC-2, and worked in perhaps 7 departments during his stay at CWS, so he was fairly familiar with its operation. He said that the CWS plant was built in 1940 or so. The plant was staffed by Monsanto people but a U.S. Army Colonel apparently acted as a supervisor of the operation. He recalled that the government itself built the plant and that Monsanto bought the plant from the government about 1946. CWS kept secret most of what it was that they made there, but he recalls handling sulfuric acid, chlorine, something called aniline, and other materials used in its processes. I asked him if he recalled knowing anything about a dump area north of the old CWS plant (now Edwin Cooper Company). He did not recall there being any dumping activities done by CWS or Monsanto there, but recalled that the American Zinc Company next door used to dump in that area, which he remembers as being quite low-lying at that time, in contrast to the relatively level grade of it now. Back in those days, the only dump in the area used by the Monsanto Company was what he called "Leo's big hole", south and slightly to the east of the Monsanto complex, directly east what is now Cerro Copper Company. As to the area north of the CWS plant, he recalled that there were some areas that were pooling occasionally, and recalls material dumped there called P and A (?).

009674

November 12, 1980

Page 3

As to Leo Sauget's dump, he recalled that almost all the industries in the area at one time or another dumped there. Specifically, he remembers seeing on many occasions dumpsters belonging to the Lubright (now Mobil Oil) refinery going in and out of there, supposedly dumping oil residues and the like. He said that Leo's dump operation started at the east bank of Dead Creek and was worked back toward Falling Springs Road. He recalled many occasions of fires at the dump site, and everyone assumed that Leo was burning some of the materials in there to make room for more wastes. As far as he knew, trash of all kinds were being accepted there without hesitation, those being the days of no governmental regulations on that sort of activity. He could not be any more specific as to what kinds of materials went into the dump.

He said that Monsanto now disposes of almost all its waste residue at the Rollins Environmental Services site in Louisiana. Apparently the Matlack Trucking Company hauls most of those materials for Monsanto now. It used to be that all of Monsanto's residues and other wastes went to Paul Sauget's dumps in this area. Monsanto has some trailers of its own, and used to lease many more trailers from the Slay Transportation Company in St. Louis. He said that Monsanto people haul some acids now to the Company's Queeny plant in St. Louis and some to barges on the river for shipment, but apparently no long-haul work. It used to be that all residue was hauled by in-house people.

I asked him specifically about PCB's at the Monsanto Plant. He said he used to handle them on a regular basis because they were used as a heating agent in the plant itself. He said that before Monsanto's incinerator was built, PCB wastes used to be dumped at Leo Sauget's big hole. He said that PCB wastes also used to be run in some instances directly into the sewers, this going back at least 20 years or so, before regulations came out prohibiting such activities. He said the Company made PCB's for a period of at least 30 years, beginning maybe as far back as 1948 or so. The trade name for most of their PCB products was Aroclor, used as an insulating and heat-resistant material. As used in the plant itself, PCB products would on occasion need changing, and wastes would be simply pumped out of the sewer systems directly into the Mississippi River, this being sometime ago, with the possibility of back-ups or whatever into the Dead Creek.

009675